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## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> The opposition Sarmiento sets up in *Facundo* is between the 'civilized' values of the Unitarian intellectuals and the 'barbarian' values of the Federalist-supporting populace and gauchos (who were not Indians). Hence, I use the term 'indigenous' to refer to the *criollo gauchos* of the Pampas and not to the native Americans, who had been largely wiped out—a fact which evidently made Argentina one of the Latin American countries with the fewest indigenous populations, which contributed to her 'Europeanization'.
- <sup>2</sup> I refer to Kalokyris' relation to Borges in two articles: 'Kalokyris and Borges: A Study of Their Syncretist Aesthetics' (2005) and 'Aristotle, Borges, Kalokyris: The Universe of the Poetics and the Poetics of the Universe' (2003a).
- <sup>3</sup> José Hernández's gauchesque poem, *Martín Fierro* (written in 1872 and 1879), celebrates the free-spirited 'criollo gaucho' ('Creole cowboy') of the Pampa in an age when Pampas rural life is being replaced by the project of modernization and the rapidly expanding urban areas.
- <sup>4</sup> All translations from Greek are mine.
- <sup>5</sup> From The Macedonian Press Agency: <<http://www.hri.org/news/greek/mpa/1997/97-03-25.mpa.html>>.

## FRAILE CASTAÑEDA, LAS MATRONAS, AND THE POST-INDEPENDENCE PRESS IN BUENOS AIRES

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*Solamente os diré que el amor por la patria,  
y el zelo por la religión, en que felizmente  
hemos nacido, eran el único móvil de su alma,  
y de su lengua* (Aldazor 1833: 26).

The patriotism, political dissidence and prolific publishing of Franciscan friar Francisco de Paula Castañeda (1776-1832) have ensured a place for him in Argentine Independence history, which eventually saw him exiled from the province of Buenos Aires. His publications caused offence to many, including Marcos Balcarce, the interim governor of the province, who defended himself in a publication of 1821 against Castañeda's 'sátira e invectiva inicua', and called him 'ese Judas que se nos ha aparecido, entre los apóstoles de la imprenta' (Balcarce 1821: 1). As Fabián Herrero observes, Castañeda is either presented as 'un hombre valiente, altruista, patriota' or, sharing the infamy of all pamphleteers, 'el cura loco' (Herrero 2002: 247). In 1934, in true Buenos Aires style, Castañeda was the subject of posthumous psychoanalysis and was diagnosed a pathological attention-seeker (Loudet 1934).

Surprisingly, little literary research has been undertaken on the many pamphlets Castañeda wrote, challenging though they are, and as influential as they were on the 1830s Buenos Aires press. Existing textual studies, such as those by Josefina Ludmer (2000) and Nicolás Lucero (2003), consider Castañeda's literary style to be early gaucho literature. Other critics ignore Castañeda's portrayal of 'los emponchados despreciables' (gauchos) (Castañeda 2001: 113) and, noting instead Castañeda's foregrounding of female characters, have engaged in pseudo-feminist stocktaking and rushed to label Castañeda as either feminist or anti-feminist. Whilst Raúl H. Castagnino sees Castañeda as writing in 'defensa del régimen patriarcal' (Castagnino 1960: 89), Néstor Tomás Auza (Castañeda 2001) and Olga Fernández Latour de Botas (1982) agree with Miguel Ángel Scenna that 'más de un siglo antes del voto femenino, Castañeda quería a la mujer clínicamente a la par del hombre' (Scenna 1977: 23). These cursory 'feminist'



evaluations, which ignore what Joan Wallach Scott calls the 'intractable contradictions' (Scott 1996: 1) of gender history, are unsubstantiated by textual evidence, and disregard the many political and cultural references in Castañeda's work. A further limitation of research on Castañeda has been the tendency to view his writing as a cultural oddity rather than acknowledging the tradition of the satirical pamphlet.

In this paper I discuss two such texts written by Castañeda, *La Matrona Comentadora* (1821-2) and *Doña María Retazos* (1821-3), which have fictitious female editors. I challenge previous readings and argue that the prominence of women in Castañeda's work has little to do with the *querelle des femmes* - the debate on the status and nature of women; Castañeda's real interest was government policy and his principal aim was to ridicule male public figures by implying that 'se ha vuelto femenino; un gobierno varonil' (Castañeda 2001: 176). Therefore the incidence of women in Castañeda's work is primarily metaphorical and derogatory. Julie Greer Johnson writes: 'From the sixteenth century to the eighteenth, misogyny emerged as a principal theme of early Spanish American satire, and it even overshadowed the criticism of political figures as a more popular and less risky topic' (Greer Johnson 1993: 158-59).<sup>1</sup> I argue that, in the nineteenth-century, Castañeda used misogynist stereotypes in order to criticize political figures, using the former to undermine the authority and legitimacy of the latter.

The son of a Spanish father and a Creole mother, Castañeda was born in the city of Buenos Aires in 1776, the year in which the Viceroyalty of the River Plate was created to strengthen the territories from the designs of the Portuguese Crown. Castañeda entered Franciscan monastic life at the age of eleven and later studied philosophy in the Real Colegio de San Carlos in Buenos Aires. In 1798 he was ordained and sent to the Viceroyalty's University of Córdoba to further his studies (Gutiérrez 1998: 122-23).

Castañeda was a key figure in the independence movement, which began with the British invasions of Buenos Aires in 1806 and 1807. If not actually engaging in hand-to-hand combat, he was there to give the mass afterwards. The British were defeated twice, not by Spanish military expertise but rather by local militias formed in the heat of the moment to protect their city. When the sieges were over, it was Castañeda who gave the thanksgiving sermons (Furlong 1994: 22-3). Castañeda supported the May Revolution of 1810, when Viceroy Baltasar Hidalgo de Cisneros was ousted, and the Primera Junta was formed to govern Buenos Aires during the imprisonment of Ferdinand VII. Castañeda considered independence a 'justa y santa causa' (Castañeda 1814: 1) and gave a service commemorating the May Revolution in the city's cathedral in 1815.

Aside from his commitment to the independence cause, Castañeda was also a supporter of public education. He founded La Sociedad Filantrópica de Amantes de la Educación in 1815 (Furlong 1994: 451). That year he also opened two drawing schools in Buenos Aires (*La Gaceta de Buenos Aires*, 2 IX 1815). He was an advocate of the Lancaster teaching method, believing it to have been developed by a Catholic and stolen by Quaker Joseph Lancaster. In 1817 an anonymous informant to the Spanish Crown reported: 'Fraile franciscano muy estimado en Buenos Aires por su carácter benéfico y sus servicios a la educación pública' (Carbia 1945: 29).

With the loss of the protection of the Spanish Crown, the role of the Catholic Church was opened to debate in Buenos Aires. The Primera Junta confirmed that the provinces of the River Plate were of the Roman Catholic faith, and a subsequent government translation of Rousseau's *Social Contract* omitted the chapter critical of religion (Moreno 1810). Although the constitution of 1819 asserted Catholicism as the official religion, this early support was not to last, and the problem was further complicated by the River Plate region's lack of a bishop from 1812 onwards, Rome remaining loyal to the Patronato and the Spanish king. The subject of political organization was even more contentious. Castañeda was in favour of unitary centralism, with Buenos Aires as the capital of a new nation-state, although he would become gradually disaffected by increasing Unitarian anti-clerical ideology.

The divisions between the Federalist and Unitarian factions came to a head when the Buenos Aires government imposed unitary policy in the Constitution of 1819, which was rejected by the Federalists. The Supreme Director of the United Provinces, Juan Martín de Pueyrredón, stood down due to the political and economic crisis which ensued. He was replaced by José Rondeau who sought, but did not receive, the help of General San Martín. For Unitarians like Castañeda worse was yet to come. The Federalist caudillos, Estanislao López and Francisco Ramírez, defeated Rondeau's troops in the Battle of Cepeda of 1820, after which they marched on Buenos Aires. Rondeau stood down and the national government collapsed. Shortly afterwards Manuel de Sarreatea, one of the many governors of Buenos Aires that year, signed a peace accord, *el Tratado de Pilar*, with the caudillos. This was regarded as utter humiliation for Unitarian Buenos Aires. That year the province had over twenty governors initiating what is called 'the age of anarchy'.

The idea of a Federal state was not the only cloud on the horizon. In 1820 Bernardino Rivadavia (who in 1826 became Argentina's first president) returned to Buenos Aires (after travelling to Europe as an envoy of the United Provinces of the River Plate) with great ambitions for reform, including a radical liberal secularization programme. As government minister in 1821, Rivadavia



began to eye Church property and capital. That same year Castañeda was elected to the Sala de Representantes, but Rivadavia produced a dossier to prevent any member of the clergy from holding office (Castañeda 1821).

Dismayed at the secular direction that the independence movement was taking, the failures of Unitarianism, and disgusted by his treatment, Castañeda took up his pen and began to write the satirical political pamphlets which are the subject of this paper. These pamphlets led to his exile, first to the cordillera (Scenna 1977: 23) and later to Carmen de Patagones, whence he escaped to Montevideo (Castañeda 2001: 30). His publications were judged by the Buenos Aires government as seditious, libelous, and an incitement to anarchy.

Conventionally the style of the pamphlet genre is plain speaking, satirical and offensive, which suited Castañeda's purposes. For each pamphlet he invented a fictional editor with a strong subjective voice, following the European eighteenth-century press trend that Inmaculada Urzainqui calls the 'registro personalista' (Urzainqui 1995: 194). This editor would engage in dialogue with other personae, some invented and some real, both living and dead. For example, Rousseau, Voltaire, Masons such as Alexander Pope, and even Castañeda himself, were part of these discussions and disputes. Other characteristics were crude language, a range of characters, dialogue, verse, ballad, fables, fabricated correspondence, and news reports. In this way Castañeda was faithful to the original meaning of satire as a medley. In the words of one of Castañeda's characters, El Gauchi-político, in a letter to La Matrona Comentadora:

[...] la patria me da libertad para escribir lo que yo quiera, y abundar en mi sentido para ilustrar a mi pueblo con historias, con parábolas, con anécdotas, con sátiras, con invectivas, con cuentos, con discursos, con filípicas, con amonestaciones, y en fin como mejor pudiere. (LMC, 2, 19-20)

Many gendered metaphors appear in Castañeda's *Despertador Teofilantópico-místico-político*, dedicado a las matronas argentinas y por medio de ellas a todas las personas de su sexo que pueblan hoy la faz de la tierra y la poblarán en la sucesión de los siglos, published in 1820. The text's frame is that women (or rather female anonyms) such as Doña Religión Católica, Doña Deseosa de Saber Verdades Útiles, Doña Unión and Doña Buenos-Ayres, send in letters and El Despertador answers them. Indeed, all of Castañeda's publications feature letters signed with female anonyms. In *La Matrona Comentadora* and *Doña María Retazos* however, the personifications develop into characters.

The complete title of *Doña María Retazos* is not usually quoted in full but, in itself, clearly indicates that the matter in hand was certainly not the woman question. *Doña María Retazos de varios autores trasladados literalmente para instrucción, y desengaño de los filósofos incrédulos que al descuido, y con cuidado nos han enfermado en el año veinte del siglo diez y nueve de nuestra era cristiana* also makes mention of philosophers and Federalism. Castañeda believed that the application of European Enlightenment thought to the River Plate was responsible for the Revolution's failings, including the rise of Federalism. The fictional editorial persona is the eponymous Doña María Retazos. Although taking the courtesy title 'Doña' she is in fact a young girl. She is a symbol of the Revolution, sharing its age and political immaturity: 'Mi tratamiento quiero que sea Vmd. Llano, y aun si me tratasen de tú no me daría yo por agraviada; la razón es porque mi nación no está constituida, y siendo toda un *totum revolutum* ni tengo rango' (DMC, prospectus, 7).

The prospectus begins with a piece on 'esto de trasladar obras, y pensamientos ajenos'. It states that since biblical times nothing original has been written. The only original voice is that of God. Not Homer, Voltaire or even Moses wrote anything new:

Resulta pues que la sabiduría es antiquísima, y que toda novedad es ignorancia, fantasmagoría, y es querernos enfeñar para sacarnos del camino trillado, y dispersarnos, distraernos, y perdernos por esos trigales de Dios.

[...] a los principios les entró a nuestros escritores un furor uterino de copiar mal autores franceses, autores ingleses, autores norteamericanos con tanto tesón que yo era de temer que a vuelta de algunos años Sudamérica se volviese un Babel, o una confusión de confusiones. (DMC, prospectus, 4-5)

The word 'retazos' indicates a scrapbook; a haphazard and artless composite of extracts written by other people. It parodies editors who transcribe snippets of European Enlightenment texts in their periodicals and attacks a kind of journalism which copies and, according to Castañeda, badly translates foreign authors, favouring pieces that attack the clergy. This type of periodical is likened to a woman's scrapbook. Doña María Retazos refers to her relatives as 'todos los que empollan obras ajenas, y se mantienen de retazos, a falta de caudal propio' (DMR, prospectus, 7). In other words, people who merely hatch (a female function) foreign ideas. The analogy between women and newspaper editors is emphasised with the verb 'empollar', suggesting the Platine word 'pollera' for skirt.



According to Jorge Myers (2004: 42), the press law of 1821 ensured that texts such as Castañeda's could be excluded from free debate on the grounds that they were not sufficiently enlightened. The subject of freedom of the press often arises in *Doña María Retazos*. Castañeda ridicules the hypocrisy of the government, which lauds press freedom and yet condemns his writing. He describes press freedom as a Dulcinea; one moment considered the ideal woman, and the next a poor ugly maid who is not so highly regarded that:

[...] se proclama la libertad de imprenta como una sin par Dulcinea, consuelo único de los que acabando de voltear la administración quieren sostenerse en el descrédito de los que accidentalmente están a los pies de los caballos; pero cuando se varían las circunstancias es una gracia el ver como esos mismos mandrines afectan una moderación de cuatro chicotes, y en dos por tres ya para ellos Dulcinea no es más que la aldeana Aldonza Lorenza. (*DMR*, 1, 1-2)

Doña María Retazos represents the state of the Revolution. Instead of growing up to be a mature woman, that is to say a stable republic, she instead spends her time quoting foreign thinkers for no apparent purpose. She cannot even do this consistently and instead writes letters to the Federalist caudillo Ramírez, representing the May Revolution as courting Federalism. This is a reference to Unitarian compromise and the recently signed Treaty of Pilar. Writers are ridiculed for slavishly copying and disseminating European Enlightenment ideas. *Doña María Retazos* engages in debates on Federalism, anti-clericalism, government, journalism and freedom of the press, but not the woman question.

Turning to *La Matrona Comentadora*, the fictitious frame is as follows: the nineteenth century has brought tremendous change and for the first time in history women cannot trust men who have failed to organize the republic and safeguard the future of their children: 'Las matronas profundamente afectadas con los sucesos tan tristes como extraordinarios, que han acaecido en el siglo diez y nueve [...] no han podido menos de desconfiar por primera vez de sus varones' (*LMC*, prospectus, 1). The women decide to leave their husbands for forty years, but in the end it does not seem right to leave the useless menfolk to fend for themselves: '¡Ha! ¿Y qué será de nuestros varones? ¿quien cuidará de ellos siendo como son tan inútiles?' (*LMC*, prospectus, 2). Thus the women form an assembly and decide to produce a periodical. *La Matrona*, as the editor, states that she will not try to enlighten readers and she will stay clear of philosophy which does not take sufficiently into account the variety of circumstances in different places, peoples and periods, conveying the sense that European models are not necessarily appropriate for the River Plate region.

Huiré cielo y tierra de filosofías y especulaciones, porque en materias políticas, mucho más que en cualquier otro material, varían tanto las circunstancias de lugares, personas, y tiempos, que a cada paso la práctica desmiente a la más bien meditada especulativa. (*LMC*, prospectus: 5)

As in *Doña María Retazos*, the text mainly comprises of *La Matrona's* correspondence. It features essays on education (mainly the Lancaster teaching method) and serial accounts of *La Matrona's* dream in which Castañeda's writings are burnt under a sign saying 'triumfo de la filosofía' while a Liberal Inquisition favours texts by Voltaire and Diderot. *La Matrona Comentadora* is scandalised: '[...] pues yo estoy segura de que cualquier libro de cocina español intruye más, y deleita más, que Raynal, Voltaire, Volnei, y todos esos diablos que nos han enfederado' (*LMC*, 5, 82). While *Doña María Retazos* singles out Ramírez for punishment, *La Matrona Comentadora* frequently attacks Pedro Cavia, the Liberal editor of *El Americano*.

Thus the narrative frame of the female editor and the women's assembly in *La Matrona Comentadora* was one of Castañeda's methods of depicting the failings of the Buenos Aires government and mocking the incapability of male public figures. The issues he addresses in the publication are key to nation building: education, the Church, European philosophy, and the role of the press.

Despite his Unitarian politics, Castañeda's colloquial and eclectic style became a model for periodical literature during the years of Federalist domination under Juan Manuel de Rosas (1829-52). A theatrical journalism was used by Federalist pamphleteers such as Luis Pérez, author *La Gaucha* of Platine press in subsequent years; an example is Domingo Faustino Sarmiento's literary creation Josefa Puntiguda in the letters page of *El Zonda* de San Juan of 1839. In 1852, twenty years after Castañeda's death, a comic periodical appeared entitled *El Padre Castañeta* (as in castanets) *crítico-burlesco literario, político y de costumbre*. In this way Castañeda left his mark on the Argentine press.

This form of dissent was used elsewhere in Latin America during the immediate post-independence period. In Mexico Liberal José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi wrote pamphlets such as *Cincuenta respuestas de una mujer ignorante a otras tantas preguntas del pensador mexicano* and *Allá van esas frioleras al pensador mexicano de Anita la Respondona*, both of 1821. These texts engage in dialogue with his better known publication *El Pensador* and address issues such as military affairs, government and the law, in a humorous vein, drawing analogies



between cooking and politics, for example there are as many ways to conduct elections (not all of them democratic) as there are to serve eggs: '[...] los que a mí me gustan, y aun adaptan con más generalidad, son los revueltos; pero con tal, que estén sazonados al paladar y gusto de los que los comen, no al de las cocineras que los guisan' (*Cincuenta respuestas*: 4).

In conclusion, Castañeda used female personae to frame his attacks on the Buenos Aires government and burgeoning secular culture. His pamphlets represent the May Revolution as a young girl and the Buenos Aires government as a group of women, unmanly in their failure to protect the region from Federalism. Gendered metaphors aside, Castañeda was not concerned with women's role in society but rather sought to thwart the Liberal voices, contesting the authority of the Catholic Church. Close examination of *Doña María Retazos* and *La Matrona Comentadora* shows that Castañeda's aim was to demonstrate the ineptitude of his contemporary male thinkers, politicians and writers. To Castañeda, these men were as ridiculous as his female characters and, unlike María and the matrons, they did not have the good sense to allow themselves to be guided by the Church. In spite of disparate critical responses to Castañeda's treatment of gender, it seems that scholars have failed to see that his was a war on early nineteenth-century political trends which did not include feminism<sup>1</sup>.

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## NOTE

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## BEYOND BORDERS: SILVINA OCAMPO'S RELATIONSHIP TO FRANCE

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*Esa costumbre de irse, tan argentina*  
(*La Nación*, 2003)

The old image of Buenos Aires as the 'Paris of the South', with its wide tree-lined avenues, public parks and fin-de-siècle architecture is a well-worn topos. Likewise the idea of Paris as a cultural mecca for Argentina's early twentieth-century socio-cultural elite, with the almost obligatory initiatory journey there, as part of 'esa costumbre de irse, tan argentina'. What I shall explore here through my reading of the poetry of Silvina Ocampo is a perspective on France as a whole (not just Paris) which focuses less on the country as model or cultural icon, but instead uses the poet's emotional engagement with France as a means to self-knowledge, and to a better understanding of her relationship to the patria, Argentina.

Helena Percas describes France as: 'país venerado al que [Ocampo] debe sus primeros gustos literarios sin ser por ello menos argentina' (Percas 1954: 283). According to Noemí Ulla: 'la larga permanencia de la familia Ocampo en París y la cultura francesa que se hicieron públicos y en Silvina, lazos con la literatura e intercambio de ambas literaturas: la francesa en [Argentina] y la argentina en Francia' (Ulla 2000: 200). Silvina Ocampo first went to Paris with her family at the age when she was learning to read and write. She then returned for three years at the age of twenty-six (1929-1932), during which time she studied painting with de Chirico, on which subject she later composes the poem 'Epístola a Giorgio de Chirico', analysed by Ulla (1999 & 2000: 131-43). In this poem there is a hint as to how Ocampo has absorbed his way of seeing things; she declares: 'lo que aún no pintó, para mí existe / con imágenes suyas en mis ojos' (Ocampo 2002: 246). I point this out as an indication of Ocampo's ability to inhabit imaginatively the vision of an other. Between these first two visits she was continually exposed to French, since she was educated at home by French and English governesses. Her sister Victoria states that: 'el francés quedó como el punto central de nuestra educación' (Montes 1999: 22) and Silvina comments on